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To Assimilate or Integrate? The Narratives of Eight Black Students at Historically White Universities in the Western Cape: Can Education be Seen as Oppression or Privilege?

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To Assimilate or Integrate? The Narratives of Eight Black Students at Historically White Universities in the Western Cape.

Can education be seen as oppression or privilege?

Mari Faines

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In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for: South Africa: Multiculturalism and Human Rights

SIT Study Abroad, a Program for World Learning

Cape Town

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	3
Abstract	4
Introduction	5
Glossary	8
Literature Review	10
Methodology	21
Findings	26
Organization of structure and School System	27
Observations	30
Student Interviews	34
Conclusion	47
Recommendations for Further Study	50
Bibliography/ Reference list	51
Appendices	
Interview Questions	54
Sample Consent form	55

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Abstract

This independent study project analyses the implications of democracy on the higher education system following the end of Apartheid, through a small scale research project which included, classroom, social, and campus observations, as well as in-depth interviews with black African students at Historically White Universities on the Western Cape including the University of Stellenbosch and University of Cape Town. Though these sites cannot be representative of the higher education system as a whole, they do provide a particular insight, especially in regards to the complexities of integration in both academic and social settings at previously white only universities.

This study should give one a better understanding of the experiences, feelings, and daily occurrences of a group of black African students as they maneuver through these historically white spaces. In this study I hypothesize that although black students have been physically integrated into the space, there is still marginalization and stigma around being a black student at these historically white universities. I believe, these feelings of being ostracized or stereotyped could only be enhanced by the increasing debates surrounding Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) and Employment Equity (EE) in mainstream South African society, as well as Transformation Policy debates and Language debates at the University of Cape Town and University of Stellenbosch respectively. I concede that although obvious racial differences may be physically apparent there will be students who do not hold these feelings of being ostracized, marginalized, or stereotyped at these universities.

This research has been structured to analyze the experience of a small grouping of black students prior to their entrance to university, not limited to home life and community, juxtaposed against their individual experiences at University of Cape Town or University of Stellenbosch. At the conclusion of this Independent Study Project one should better understand the feelings of these students and whether they have sentiments of forced assimilation into the majority university culture, or if all students feel they culturally share the space equally. In conclusion, the information which can be taken away from this project include but are not limited to, a better understanding of ever changing definition of “disadvantage”, analysis of policy debates within each institution, and real experiences from real students at these universities.

Introduction

Project Overview

On May 7th, 2014 South Africa will hold its 5th democratic election. One of the most controversial issues on the docket this time around is access to education including, access to higher education. Prior to the integration of the schools in 1994 the division between the school systems provided each one of the three defined races¹, with a school system for themselves. This allowed for the best possible school systems for people of European Descent and the worst for “Bantu” (Black) people. Today in post-apartheid South Africa schools are still fighting the divisions in quality of education, which were created decades ago. The integration of Black students into historically white institutions has been a hot topic as people continue to redefine integration and access to these institutions. As more black students become qualified to attend these institutions of higher learning the debates around the “historically white” culture of the university and their acceptance of black students and their cultures has become more of an issue. The literature examining the topic of integration and assimilation of black students into these historically white spaces have increased over the past decade. Both primary and secondary sources are constantly analyzing the convergence of these two racial groups in such historic spaces.

Some of the most studied spaces included University of Cape Town and the University of Stellenbosch. This project builds upon the literature, which has been provided in the past and seeks to understand the experiences of black African students and their personal experiences at both the University of Cape Town and the University of Stellenbosch respectively. With this project I hoped to garner a better understanding of what it is like to be a black African student in these historically white spaces and whether these students felt as though their status as a black African student played a role in their experiences while attending each university. These experiences included their lives in residence, academic spaces, as well as social settings both on and off campus. Although there is literature, which probed students on these topics before, I felt it necessary to expand on their findings with a small pocket of students.

The goal of this project is not to make generalizations about all black African students and their experiences at these institutions but rather to give an understanding of experiences of a few individual students

¹ Race in this context is defined by the apartheid system. In this historical context, race was a socially constructed concept and included three racial classifications, “Black”, “Coloured”, and “White”. Although these classifications were socially constructed groupings, they are a necessary framework for this paper in order to analyze the statistical changes in the higher education system following the creation of democratic South Africa in 1994.

as best described by themselves. The narratives of these young men and women were accompanied by observations of the university spaces and basic interactions, which I as a researcher observed throughout my time on campus. At the end of this research I hope to give a better voice to the small pocket of students, which I interviewed and hopefully their stories can be used to enhance the greater narrative of black African students at each university respectively. One day these stories may hopefully one day help to create a safe space for black African students and create a space in these historic spaces, as well as create equal access for students of all colors, races, and ethnicities alike.

Structure of the Paper

This paper begins with an analysis of the higher education system in South Africa over the past century. This includes the education system throughout the apartheid area ending in the stories of current students. Literature on this subject will mainly be geared toward access to education and access to higher education for Black Students over the past century. Through the analysis of each respective piece of literature one should garner a better understanding of the obstacles black students faced to arrive in these historically white institutions. One will also garner a better understanding the lives of current black students in both their communities and the South African in general.

After creating the framework of the black student during apartheid, I attempt to define “disadvantage” as it can be seen in the context of today. This includes analyzing the upward mobility of the black middle class, acceptance of black students into white and coloured schools, and the dynamics such as assimilation, colorblindness, and micro-aggressions, which can be seen as a result of upward mobility. By outlining these new definitions one should begin to understand the social stigmas, which may be placed upon black African, students when they arrive at these historically white institutions of higher learning. In closing, I analyze a few case studies on the University of Cape Town and University of Stellenbosch.

The paper then moves into my methods and later findings, concluding with the analysis of observations and interviews, which I conducted. In analyzing my findings I examine the question, have black students been culturally integrated into the community of these historically white universities, or have they solely been integrated as physical bodies, for a political agenda?

Primary Vs. Secondary Sources

I used a combination of both primary and secondary sources including:

Primary:

- I conducted personal interviews
- I attended the Vice-Chancellor's consultation on the Transformation Policy
- I engaged in participant observation

Secondary:

- I analyzed many forms of academic and non-academic literature

Limitations of Study

The four-week period allotted for independent study for this project was both a significant period of time, and a limiting time constraint. In the beginning of the project I set out to interview between six and eight students at both universities combined. I was lucky enough to gain eight interviews in total, but it was not a simple task. In searching for black South African students at each university, I made the decision to open my pool of students non-South African black students, including all students that self-identified as black from the continent of Africa. In the beginning of the project I set out to solely interview 'black South African' students but for a myriad of reasons including, the invaluable insight of black international students, I made the decision to include all students who self identified as black and African. Throughout the course of the ISP timeline there were a plethora of holidays and examination periods which although made it harder to watch students in an academic setting. Luckily, it still allowed for personal interviews with students who were willing to allot me pieces of their free time. I concede that there were limitations to getting to each campus respectively but, with the help of public transportation each trip was made.

I would also like to acknowledge my status as an American student, at first glance people were hesitant to speak with me but after explaining my project and my status as a black student at a historically white university in the United States, students were more willing to engage me in conversation. Although there were obvious limitations to study throughout my time here in South Africa it did not hinder my ability to create this project and have an enjoyable time while I was engaged in my work.

Glossary

Afrikaans- The language spoken by the Afrikaner people

Afrikaner- A White South African, also a descendant of the original Dutch settlers who arrived in South Africa with the Dutch East India Company, in the early 1700s

Bantu- Black Person (as defined by the apartheid regime)

BCOM- Bachelor of Commerce

BEE-Black Economic Empowerment, a system of addressing the socio-economic ramifications of apartheid

Born Free Generation- Youth Born after 1994

Coloured- Racial classification socially constructed by the apartheid regime

Cheese Girl- A black person who does not necessarily have to worry about the troubles of every day black people because of their physical appearance

Coconut- A black person with “white” tendencies or who tries to “act white”

EE- Employment Equity, a measure for addressing the job market disparities as a ramification of apartheid

Goodwood- A Cape Town suburb

Gauteng- A province in the northern region of South Africa

H.F Verwoerd- Prime minister of South Africa from 1958 until he was murdered in 1966. Known as the father of apartheid

HBU- Historically Black Universities (and technikons)

HWUs- Historically White Universities (and technikons)

Homelands- An area set under apartheid for black South Africans

ISP- Independent Study Project

isiXhosa- the language of Xhosa (specific to the Xhosa people of South Africa)

Langa- Cape Town's first township

Matric- Final Testing to enter into university

Model C School- Private or independent schools (in South Africa)

National Party- The governing party of South Africa from 1948 to 1994

NBT- National Bookmark Test

NSC- National Senior Certificate (also known as Matric)

Technikons- South African technical college

UCT- University of Cape Town

US- University of Stellenbosch

Literature Review

“One of the key promises of the Freedom Charter, which had a strong resonance for students fighting the apartheid regime was the doors of learning would be opened to all,” (Le Roux 2013) although this is still debatable. The education debate is one, which has been occurring in South Africa long before the Soweto Student Riots of 1976 or The Extension of University Education Act of 1959, but this is an issue which can be seen all over the world. There are very few countries, which have mastered the art of providing all of their citizens with the highest level of education possible, at an affordable price, in addition to being up to the world standard; South Africa is no exception to this problem. Since before the beginning of apartheid, South Africa has been in a complex debate about the role of education in their country. The socio-economic disparities created by the colonialist system in South Africa were the beginning of the divide in the education system in the country. With the Separate Amenities Act of 1953, the government was given the opportunity to unequally allocate government funds based on the racial and socio-economic hierarchy of the country. The same year that these funds were re-allocated, The Bantu Education Act was passed through legislation, forcing Bantu learners out of white and coloured schools and into their own educational institutions (Higham, 2012). These acts of legislation coupled with the Pass Laws act of 1952, a law which required black South Africans to carry passes to be granted in “white only” areas, allowed for a special separation of people, that only further enhanced negative ideologies about one another, and allowed for the creation of myths and stereotypes which can still be seen throughout racial debates in today's post-apartheid South Africa.

In 1996 with the institution of a new constitution there was the implementation of, “equal civil, social, and economic rights for all while providing affirmative action to redress the historical under-representation of in particular black people, women and/or people with disabilities.” (Higham, 2012) Twenty years after democracy and over 50 years after the creation of these acts, the South African education system is still fighting a bloodied, bruised, and tattered past, as they try to repair the wounds which were created by their unequal education systems. As the nation attempts to become the “rainbow” that they describe today, the country has a long history to parse through before people are all on the same socio-economic and educational gradient.

As stated earlier, the South African education system has been a complex system long before the institution of apartheid. Beginning in the early 1900s, small amounts of black South Africans were admitted each year into universities, and although their acceptance rates were much lower than white students, they were at a more consistent annual rates than could be seen during apartheid or even today. These rates continued from the early 1900s until 1948 when the Nationalist party took office; suddenly in 1950 of the 23,122 students enrolled in university only 5.7% or 1,350 students were Black (Le Roux 2013). As the decline of the number of

black students in university continued, the first Nationalist presidents JBM Herzog and Jan Hofmeyr continued to argue that the admittance of black students were completely subjective to each individual institution of higher learning, rather than at the hands of the government (Le Roux 2013). This continued until 1959 when The Extension of University Education Act, gave the minister of education draconian powers, which he used to prohibit universities to admit Black students (Le Roux 2013).

Prior to the beginning of The Extension of University Education Act, there were 4,481 “black” students enrolled in the tertiary university system, with about half of them enrolled at the University of South Africa. Following this act from 1960-1970 there was still a 10% increase of black student enrollment, even though students were filtered into non-white universities, to aid in what Verwoerd called “homelands” and these locations functioning at a high standard (Le Roux 2013). As the state government realized that its creation of ethnic mobilization was counterproductive and misdirected, as stated by De Lange (1981), suddenly there was a rapid increase in black student admittance into Technikons. These Technikons were schools, which had been created in 1978, in order, create technical and commercial training to prepare students to work in the community rather than in intellectual and academic settings (Le Roux 2013). This increase in black students into technikons remained consistent until the beginning of the 1990’s at the end of apartheid. With the beginning of democracy there was a change in the type of higher education that was accessible to black students, changing the way they approached their ability to attend both black and white institutions of higher education.

Although it is clear with the beginning of democracy South Africa made a concerted effort to change the education system, including spending roughly 6-7% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on education (Le Roux 2013), one of the highest in the world, it did not refine its system in a manner which made a significant change in the quality of education given to its citizens, allowing the education system to consistently rank in the lower end of the world spectrum. The structural problems with in the system of education in this country are consistent with the problems the South African education system are facing with the integration of students into new spaces across the three levels of education. As stated by Soudien, “the racial discourse of apartheid has been sustained and carried into the new South Africa,” (2004) as students have been forced to racially integrate on new levels, there has been very little done to try and create ‘safe space’ for new students to prevent forced assimilation, micro-aggressions, or negative stereotypes and ideologies which could be faced by black students as they enter new educational institutions. Although these structural and human issues can be seen throughout all levels of education in post-apartheid South Africa, the staggering enrollment rate of black South African students in tertiary education since 1994 implies that there are significant flaws in the higher education system for black learners.

Biggest changes in 2014

Structural Changes in Higher Education

There have been many changes, which have been made in the higher education system since the beginning of democratic South Africa in 1994; this includes a change in the frameworks of higher education, character of students, and roles of things such as student politics and organizations. From 1990-1994, “both the historically black and white universities and technikons experienced a sudden rush on higher education institutions” (Jansen 2004). From 1990-1993 there was an enrolment increase of 80% for black students (Jansen 2004). During this time there was a decrease of about 10% of black student enrolment at Historically Black Universities, while there was a 100% increase of Black student enrolment at English medium, historically white universities, 1,120% increase in Black student enrolments in Afrikaans medium historically white universities, and a 490% increase in historically white technikons (Jansen 2004). While there was an increase in black enrollment during this time, there was also a decrease in white enrolment, which had an impact on the percentages of students and changes which could be seen at all of these universities (Le roux 2013).

In the *Call to Action* given by the Minister of Education in July 1999 he states, “The shape and size of the higher education system cannot be left to chance if we are to realize the vision of a rational, seamless higher education system...the institutional landscape of higher education will be reviewed as a matter of urgency in collaboration with the council of higher education.” (DoE 1999) With this call there was a reduction in all forms of higher education over the next few years following this address including, a reduction in universities and technikons from 36 to 21, a reduction in colleges from 120 to 60 by the beginning of 2000 (CHE 2001), and by the beginning of 2003 almost all colleges of education had been either incorporated into universities, technikons, or closed (Jansen 2004). With all of the changes made in public education there was an increase in the amount of private institutions of higher learning as well, in 1994 there were only 518 private universities while in 2001 there were 1,500 (Hofmeyr & Lee 2002). All of these reductions and changes in the formatting of the higher education system played a significant role in the diversification of these colleges and universities.

Interpersonal Changes in Lower education

As these institutions of higher learning continued to change the diversity and stereotypes, which occurred at the interpersonal level at each of these institutions, were being affected by the integration of primary and secondary schools. These schools were creating new racial dynamics as, “African Schools remained African, former Indian and Coloured schools admit Africans, former white schools admit all groups to the extent that whites have become a minority in some cases” (Higham, 2004) As historically disadvantaged

students were given the opportunity to attend schools which had formally been closed off to them, there was a large shift in the way students began to view education, and the importance of educational opportunities in order to gain a higher socio-economic status. This influenced the ideal for my black parents that garnering the best education possible for their child is essential to upward social mobility. Under this idea, one could generalize that there would be the strongest movement of black students to white schools, as they were at the peak of educational hierarchy during apartheid. Interestingly, for reasons such as travel routes it could be argued that there was a stronger movement of black students to historically Indian and coloured schools instead (Soudien 2004). In congruence there seems to be anecdotal evidence, which suggests, that coloured and Indian students utilized the transportation system in order to gain access to former white schools, which increased the population of “non-white” students at some of these institutions to approximately 50% (Soudien 2004).

In contrast to the flight of students into formerly coloured, Indian, and white schools there has not been an increase in students flocking to formerly black schools. Students, especially from historically disadvantaged backgrounds no longer want to be associated, with a “lower” type of education, while students from historically privileged background do not want to feel as they though have dropped in social or educational stature. Another interesting statistic, which has been found in lower education, which is dissimilar to the changes that can be seen in tertiary education system, is a lack of movement of black students into Afrikaans medium former white schools in significant numbers (Soudien 2004). Many assertions have been made for why there are such low number of students moving into these institutions including, stereotypes about Afrikaans being the language of the oppressor, or simply the fact that many poor black South African students are not proficient in Afrikaans at a young age hindering them from excelling in an Afrikaans medium school. This is an issue, which can be analyzed more from interpersonal interviews with black students at Afrikaans medium universities.

The Impact of Race

The movement, integration, structural, and policy changes that were made in post-apartheid South Africa, have created a race debate which can be seen in many countries with histories influenced by race including, the United States and United Kingdom (Soudien, 2004). Many believe that the South African education system has integrated at an almost flawless level; this is because on paper the government has taken the time to account for things such as Employment Equity, redress, and equality for historically disadvantaged people including not only race, but also gender, and disability. The flaw with the ideology, of complete integration especially within the educational (Specifically tertiary education system) context, is that it does not take into account the human and emotional changes, which people must make to fully integrate. This could best be described by Naidoo when he states, “integration ‘requires fundamental changes in...personal attitudes and behavior patterns among learners and teachers of minority and majority groups,” (1996) in short integration is

more than just the movement of physical space, or integration of physical bodies, it is the integration of cultures and ideologies as well. Sadly, today in Post-Apartheid South Africa, this type of integration is not occurring on a national level.

In many schools, of all levels, Students can still see that “The grouping of children, the dominant assessment practices, the learner preferences of the teacher, the display of cultural symbols, the organization of religious symbols, the scope of awards and reward, and the decisions of ‘who teaches what’ are all organized in ways that show preference based on race (as well as social class, religion and gender.” (Jansen 2004) This can be seen at the primary and secondary school level on the basis in which students interact with teachers, while at the tertiary level students are stigmatized by the type of entrance in which they enter these institutions. Many black students, due to their historically disadvantaged backgrounds are forced to enter into these institutions of higher learning with an extra year rather than through the “mainstream” entrance. Although, this is helpful in preparing them for university, the stigma and stereotypes, which often come with this, separated entrance affect the process of integration.

Assimilation

For many Black students in historically white schools and universities, the process of integration has not been one of equal access and equal footing but rather one of assimilation. As stated by Soudien this is problematic because, “the least accommodative and integrative is the assimilation position. In this position the values, traditions, and customs of the dominant group frame the social and content of the school.” (2004) The idea of assimilation is the forced, creation of a homogenous ideology in a space this often forces one group to give up pieces of themselves in order to be fully integrated into the majority space. There is a presumption, that the “subordinate group” is a threat to the standards of the dominant and culturally superior group (Naidoo, 1996). Unfortunately this ideology is a sweeping trend, which can be seen throughout both all sections of the education system. Many students, parents, and administrators, understand that this approach to integration is easiest on the majority culture because as there is an influx of historically disadvantaged students into the space, they are forced to change the ideologies, status, and structure of the institution, and would rather change the structure of the learner instead. As described by Soudien there are 3 types of assimilation, these include *Aggressive assimilation*, *Assimilation by Stealth*, and *Benign Assimilation*.

Aggressive Assimilation, can be defined as brute assimilation, it is often “characterized by high degrees of intolerance and often violence.” (Soudien 2004) This is usually the most extreme form of assimilation and is caused by a deep form of resentment and can be found in many schools, and inflicted upon “new comers” (Soudien 2004). These new comers are generally classified as black students, often from historically and

currently socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The resentment usually is enacted by students but is fueled by apartheid ideologies instilled by parental or authority figures.

The second type of assimilation is, *Assimilation by Stealth*. Soudien used this particular form of assimilation to describe schools where Black students are new and recruited into “non-racial” identities (2004). The creation of a nonracial identity allows for students to be almost oblivious to their forced integration and into the majority culture, as they are often prohibited from bringing their own culture into these institutions. This ideology is similar to the third type of assimilation entitled *benign assimilation*, but is different in the fact that at these institutions there is no mention of race, while in *benign assimilation* situations, race is often overemphasized.

The third and final type of assimilation described by Soudien is, *Benign assimilation*, this type of assimilation occurs when schools acknowledge the cultural diversity of students at their schools, including activities such as “cultural night” or “cultural day”, these schools promote being conscious of their students different races, and they want to make all parties feel like they are creating a “multicultural” community. An example of *benign Assimilation* can be seen in 1999 study by Valley and Dalama, one interviewee was asked about the integration and the changes in the schools following the 1994 and 1996 policy changes and they were quoted as saying,

“ We are fortunate to have a rich diversity of cultures in our school. We respect and recognize the different cultures and ethnic groups and promote tolerance and understand amongst them. In the beginning we had problems, mainly due to preconceived perceptions and judgments amongst different cultures, a general insecurity in the community and a lack of experience in how to deal with problems” (1999)

It is clear from this quote that this interviewee, was proud of the way their school had integrated.

The idea of Multiculturalism, which this quote as well as *Benign assimilation* stems from, is an ideology, which was created in the United States. For many “right-winged” or “conservative” people in the United States, the ideology of assimilation was much too harsh of a term, to describe the “melting pot” which the United States was trying to create. Due to this assertion, they came up with the idea of multiculturalism, to describe an inclusive community, which incorporates multiple groups and acknowledges the diversity of each separate entity. In contrast to this movement on the right, many “leftist” or “liberals” argue that multiculturalism negates, “respect for other cultures fails to engage with the complex ways in which individuals and groups develop attitudes toward one another.” (Soudien 2004) In short, they believe the assertion of multiculturalism is as, Soudien, says, *benign assimilation*.

Color Blind ideology

Another ideology, which is similar to assimilation, which has become problematic during the integration of students in post-apartheid South Africa, is the “color blind ideology”. Many schools in South Africa have been drawn toward this ideology because the nation has been forced to abolish its ideas on race, making it not only harder to collect statistics on race but also creating problematic learning environments because students are not allowed to take pride or depict the differences of their cultures. At the root of this new ideology of “color-blindness”, academics, both students and teachers are taught to see learners as humans rather than by their skin colour (Jansen 2004). In many schools where this ideology has been adapted, “Most white students say that race relations are good at their school- even that race does not exist’ some students of colour share the same opinion while others notice subtle signs of what they see as racial discrimination of the part of teachers and fellow students” (Tihanyi 2003) One critique of the colour blind ideology is the presumption that stereotypes can be forgotten over night. Although the assertion of this ideology is that if you see students as human, any thing that has to do with race or skin color can be forgotten, but due to the historical context for many this simply is not the case. It is a detriment to students to not take into account the assertion of historical disadvantage, because there are different methods which should be utilized to each students from different backgrounds and combat the potential micro-aggressions which can be seen in schools.

Case Studies

Redefining Disadvantage

As South Africa has been forced to analyze the way in which it wants to deal with race and education, following apartheid, many questions have come up on how one should define disadvantage. As there has been consistent growth in the black middle class, since the creation of democratic South Africa, many people are beginning to say there needs to be a new definition of disadvantage, that encompassed all people, instead of solely encompassing people from “historical disadvantaged” backgrounds. This new definition can be seen debated in not only government policies and access to job, but very heavily debated in the education system as well. One researcher was quoted as saying,

“The implementation of race-based policy to benefit blacks as a group, without distinguishing between the relatively privileged stratum of those who are truly disadvantaged, detracts from discussing on and assisting those most in need, particularly in a society in which they constitute the overwhelming majority of the population” (Adam 1997)

To many people, especially people from historically privileged backgrounds, the new system of Black Economic Empowerment and Employment Equity, have only hindered redress and allowed for further tension

between black and white people. In contrast to this ideology, there is job market data, which proves that there is a need for better access to higher education as a form of Employment Equity.

Implications of Lack of Education

As access to education continues to flourish for many throughout the country, there is a significant population who will never have access to these opportunities and will continue to be unemployed as a result of this inability to access the new democratic education system. The definition of unemployed, as defined by Bhorat, is “individuals who are not skilled or, put differently, have low levels of education will in all probability not get a job.” (2004) These are often older historically disadvantaged individuals who were never well educated and as a result of apartheid will never have an opportunity to gain a job in their lifetime. This is because, today in democratic South Africa they are forced to compete with a younger generation, including The Born Free Generation, who with some form of education can be trained and provided with skills, which make them viable to the labor market (Bhorat 2004)

The importance of continuing to define historic disadvantage as more than solely socio-economic status but to include race is still a necessary step in addressing both Black Economic Empowerment and Employment Equity. In February 2002, it was noted that there were 7.3million unemployed people and about 1.3 million of them were 40 or over, and of this 1.3 million 54% of these individuals had only accumulated an education of primary or school or less of schooling (Bhorat 2004). From statistics like these (as well as the chart below depict below) it is clear why it is important that historically disadvantaged students are still given access to higher education as a method of redress.

Education Level	Non-Youth	Youth	Total
No Schooling	187,058	163,620	350,678
Percentage	14.37	2.73	4.81
Primary	618,693	1 276 156	1 794 849
Percentage	398	21.31	24.62
Incomplete Secondary	445 270	2 582 593	3 027 863
Percentage	34.21	43.14	41.54
Matric	90 741	1 651 610	1742351
Percentage	6.97	27.58	23.90
Tertiary	46 627	292 771	339 398
Percentage	3.58	4.89	4.66
Unspecified	13 092	20 602	33 649
Percentage	1.01	0.34	0.46
Total	1 301 481	5 987 352	7 288 833
Percentage	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Labor Force Survey, February 2002;

Two universities, which take this method of redress very seriously, are the University of Stellenbosch and University of Cape Town. Both of these institutions are attempting to give better access to students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds as a process for redress and upward social mobility.

University of Stellenbosch

To many Black South African students, the University of Stellenbosch is a problematic place due to its history with the apartheid regime. Its status as a historically Afrikaans university as well as the birthplace of the apartheid system have created some issues as they try to create more diversity and meet government diversity quotas. For some black students the Afrikaans language has been aligned with the language of the oppressor, causing a disconnect for students and problematizing their ability to adapt to this medium of academic instruction. Students also were aware of the stigma and racial problems they could face as they tried to enter into a historically Afrikaans university. In the case of many “typical” Afrikaans universities, the alienation that can often be seen at face value stems from language, symbolism, and culture (Jansen 2004). Many white Afrikaner students, especially from the rural areas, farming communities, or all white schools, are thrown into school with Black students for the first time and are forced to interact with them on an equal and academic level rather than as their subordinates (Jansen 2004). This can cause problems, as white students, especially multi-generational white students at these universities become territorial over a place which they have heard some much about from family members generations back.

In contrast to the stereotypes and preconceived notions that White Afrikaner students may have about their black counterparts, black students were “deeply suspicious of white motives and behaviors.” (Jansen 2004) Although many of these students came from diverse backgrounds and understood how to operate in a setting in which they may have been the minority, some students felt upon arriving at the university there was a significant level of marginalization or social alienation, that was created. Many students had trouble understanding how both groups should utilize university space, as black students tried to carve new space for themselves at the university and white students attempted to maintain order. Places such as residence halls, for many white students involve a sense of community and a right of passage, while to many black students they were an individualist space to live, eat, and study, not socialize (Jansen 2004). These simple differences between the understanding of how one lives, are at the forefront of how there could be issues of fully “integrating” black students into this historically white space. Today the university is continuing to fight to meet redress quotes and garner more diversity, as they debate whether to stay simply an Afrikaans medium university

or change to become a dual language university. As they begin to incorporate more English medium students the level of diversity is changing, but many of the issues that black and white students were facing at the beginning of democracy can still be seen today.

University of Cape Town

In contrast to many of the negative stereotypes black students had about the University of Stellenbosch, and creating a place for themselves at the institution, many black students had high hopes about creating a “black space” at the University of Cape Town. The university has been accepting black students since before the democratic shift in 1994 and has always been known for its radical admittance policy. With the establishment of The Commission of Inquiry, which was created in 2011 (“From the VC’s Desk” 2013) in regards to the admission policy and potential alternatives to the use of race as a measure for redress, and a proxy for disadvantage, the university has created a lot of debate around its radical racial ideologies one again. It is clear that as the black middle class continues to grow and flourish, as 50% of the Black students at the university are among that group (Dr. Max Price, April 2014), the university believes there new debates which need to be held around disadvantage but, as University Vice Chancellor Max Price states, “ (UCT) accepts an obligation to provide access to a superior university education for students whose families suffered under apartheid because the effects of 1994 discrimination remain in our society.” (“From VC’s Desk” 2013) This commitment to accepting students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds has been one, which has been seen over the past decade and even before. The university believes that its admission policy gives effective answers in order to attempt to redress all that has happened during apartheid. They state,

“UCT provides for redress in admissions decisions not only because the Higher Education Act requires it but also because we believe in it. Decades of Gross inequality in education have been followed by continuing (and even increasing) disparities in the provision of public education. So we accept an obligation to provide access to a superior university education for students whose families suffered under apartheid and because the effects of pre-1994 discrimination remain in our society” (“From the VC’s Desk 2013)

This commitment to accepting students has often been challenged with the assertion that the university does a poor job of keeping its scholars once they have been accepted. Although, University of Cape town is know for being at the forefront of working with students to be accepted at the number one university in Africa, there are still issues of micro-aggressions, assimilation, and creating an equal space for all students within the university, as depicted by research later cited in the text.

Conclusion

Since the democratic existence of South Africa in 1994, there have been many changes made both structurally and interpersonally. As stated by Jansen, the *Social, Political, and Economic* relationships of the institutions of higher learning in South Africa are forever changed. As more students from diverse backgrounds are allowed into historically white spaces the social integrations between, staff, administrators, managers, and students has been forever altered; at the same time, the political relationship of government and higher education institutions have continued to change, and the economic changes and commodification of universities as a business has forever altered the way in which education will be accessed in this country (Jansen 2004). All of these changes in the system will forever affect the experiences of the black student in these spaces, for some students the remnants of apartheid are still at play against them, as only a small proportion of black South Africans are truly prepared for the “twenty-first century South Africa” (Le Roux 2013). In closing, although black students are finally allowed in these historically white institutions, only time will tell how these new leaders are nurtured, accepted, and utilized in both the classroom and the workforce.

Methodology

The methodology used for this project was quite simplistic in theory. In addition to framing my piece with the literature previously discussed, I utilized two major methods one on one interviews as well as participant observation. Prior to beginning either of these methods I engaged with professors and lecturers at each university respectively. This gave me the opportunity to garner a better understanding of the university from a position “power” and would aid in creating a framework for the narrative of each of the students, which I interviewed.

After engaging with lecturers from both UCT and US and observing their respective classroom styles, through participation in their lectures and one on one interviews. I set forth to begin observing students in both an academic and social setting. In order to create the most realistic view of Black and White student interaction in university space, I went to “upper campus” on the campus of the University of Cape Town and observed students in the lunchroom. This space provided a good visual to understand the university, as it was a space for all students and was constantly flowing in with new people as classes continued throughout the day.

While on the University of Stellenbosch campus I stationed myself in the Neelsie Student Center, much like the lunchroom in UCT, students of all races frequented this space and I was able to watch their interpersonal and interracial interactions over time. I concede that although both of these participant observations provided interesting data about how students interacted in a campus setting, it did not give me interpersonal interactions with the students, forcing me to make generalizations about groupings rather than getting each group’s individual story.

In addition to the observations of students in the lunchroom, I attended social spaces for students including interaction at parties, nightlife, and residence. This gave me an opportunity to watch student in spaces where the university had no regulation. With new free flowing rules, students were allowed to work in their most natural habitats and create the most organic relationships with one another. Unfortunately, once again, although I engaged in these moments with the students it did not give me an opportunity to talk to students in a way, which would give a background for each of their stories and makeup of how they see the university.

To accompany all of these participant observations I engaged in one on one interviews with black African students from both The University of Cape Town and the University of Stellenbosch. My main informants were a small group of students, which I recruited through a variety of mechanisms including referrals and direct requests. Since all students interacted with the English language at least on an academic level there was no need for a translator. Prior to each interview I gained both verbal and written consent from each of my participants. I then was able to ask them interpersonal questions, as I was trying to understand, do

students feel as though black students have assimilated into the historically white space of the university? Do they feel as though race has played a role in their experience? As well as, do they think the university is making strides to create an equal cultural space for all students? These interviews created a more substantial ideal of each person's individual thoughts, which played a part in creating a larger narrative for the participants included in my research as well as for the black experience at each university.

Ethical Reflexivity

As with any research there were ethical dilemmas, which I ran into while conducting research throughout the project. The first issue was the power dynamic created by my status as an American researcher. As a black university student on first glance, people were initially felt more at ease speaking with me, but I concede my status as an American definitely played a role when interacting. The cultural differences, which were at play as well as the global power dynamics, although not explicitly stated, often played a role in the interactions and conversations with participants. I had to be careful not to ask "leading" questions in order to make sure interviewees did not tell me what they thought, "I wanted to hear" but rather gave me their true story.

For many of my interviews I also had to be aware of my status as a female researcher interviewing males, and the gender dynamics. I had to make sure that people saw me as a creditable researcher and not a girl in which they were engaging in a romantic relationship. I had to be careful to identify the space as a nonthreatening and non-gendered zone, especially when asking participants questions about their experiences, where they were from, and their particular racial experiences at each university.

The most important piece of ethical reflexivity, which I had to take into account, was the implicit bias, which I may have brought to the research. When looking at my experiences as a black student at a historically White University in the United States, there were certain ideas, which I knew I had from my own experiences and experiences of others around me. It was important to acknowledge that this 'coloured' my interactions, as I examine how my own ideals of structural or institutionalized violence played out in my research and analysis. As well as to understand that although the colour of skin of the people I was interviewing may have been similar to mine, there is not a monolithic idea of the "black" experience (even in a historically white institution of higher learning) across the globe.

With each interview I attempted to make sure that all participants felt comfortable, especially when describing their past situations and life experiences. In order to give reciprocity to each person who completed an interview, I made sure that I spoke them to clarify their thoughts before I wrote up my findings; I also held all interviews over at least coffee, which I provided. In regards to consent form I made sure all interviewees completely understood the forms they were signing and gained both verbal and written consent. To ensure

anonymity and confidentiality of all participants were given pen names and descriptions, which will be used throughout the writing of the project. As described by D.V and Jandt, F.E article “Redefining the ‘other’ in Multicultural Research”, I made sure to both consciously and subconsciously not “other subjects”. I was careful about the light in which I painted their experience, including how I painted them within the larger context of both the University of Cape Town, University of Stellenbosch, and South African narrative in general. As I debate whether to continue with this project in the United States, I will be careful and remember to garner consent from each participant in order to continue to use their work, as I continue to engage consciously ethical practices to complete a quality project of this magnitude.

Background of Interviewees

Person A- is a Young Black man from the Eastern Cape. He is now a first year student at Stellenbosch University. In his early years he moved from the Eastern Cape to Cape Town, his mother was a teacher at a private school in the city. He grew up with people from his high school following his mother's departure from the school to join the church. He spent his high school career spending weeknights with a family from his school and weekends with his mother (to account for all of the travel it would take for him to get to school). He has been influenced by his mother tongue and his race, but definitely has found his niche at the University of Stellenbosch.

Person B- is a young black male from Namibia. He was raised in the capital and moved to South Africa in his youth to attend boarding school near Port Elizabeth. He sees himself as Black Africa and admits that this has helped to shape his space at the University of Stellenbosch as he maneuvers between being seen as Black but choosing to not be apart of my of the "Black" issues on campus.

Person C- is a young Black male from Zimbabwe. He was raised in the capital where he attended private day school until he moved to South Africa to attend private boarding school in Durbanville. Here he finished his matric before attending the University of Stellenbosch. He was quite acclimated into his boarding school where he learned about the university and although many of his classmates were of a different race, he never saw race as an issue either in boarding school or at the University today.

Person D- is a postgraduate Nigerian Male from the University of Stellenbosch. He moved to South Africa prior to his enrollment at the university following the completion of his undergraduate studies. He brings the idea that diversity in the graduate program at the University of Stellenbosch is not problematic, but being black at the University is still problematic for many students at both the graduate and under graduate level.

Person E- is a 3rd year student at the University of Cape Town. He identifies as black and was originally born in Zimbabwe. Prior to his enrollment at the University of Cape Town he moved to South Africa. He was attracted to the university for its Ranking as the #1 university in Africa, and agrees that since its integration in the early 1990s race has been impacting black South African and black African students throughout their time at the university.

Person F- is a student at the University of Cape Town. He is originally from Kenya but moved to South Africa to attend the University of Cape Town. He has strong beliefs about the university and claims that although it is clearly one of the most diverse universities in the country it still has a while to go in order to create a safe space for black students.

Person G- is a recent graduate of the University of Cape Town. She is originally from Langa Township, outside of Cape Town but in her early years moved to the Suburb of Goodwood. She considers herself a black Xhosa woman but knows that society often sees her as other things and races such as coloured. Her experience at the University of Cape Town were shaped by her assertion of race, but she is a proud graduate of UCT and states, “I am who I am” because of the UCT.

Person H- is a recent graduate of the University of Cape Town and is a current student in their Post-Graduate program. He is originally from a township in Gauteng, in the northern part of the country. His life has always been shaped by his race, especially while he was raised by a single mother, in a shack. He always aspired to use education as his way out of poverty and to make a better life for himself and his family. Although he may have struggled upon arrival at the university, his struggles only made him stronger and a voice for many poor and black youth at the university.

Findings and Analysis

The goal of this independent research is to better understand the experience of black students at historically white universities, including The University of Cape Town and the University of Stellenbosch. After hours of interviews, participant observation, and literature analysis, this paper hopes to raise questions about the role of the black African student in these historically divided spaces. As students attempt to maneuver through the social and academic realm it is important to analyze whether they feel their status as formerly oppressed people forces them to assimilate into the main stream of the university, or if they still feel marginalized or ostracized from the larger university structure. Twenty years after integration has there been an integration of more than just physical bodies, to include an acceptance and integration of culture as well? Finally, It is important to note these findings are based on a few stories of Black students in each university and although they aid in creating a larger Black narrative for the students at these universities, they do not create a monolith for all “formally disadvantaged people” currently enrolled in these universities.

Argument

At the conclusion of my findings I argue that although there has been a physical space created for black students, for many students they do not feel as though the universities have become as “diverse” in practice as they are depicted on paper. From interviews with students at the University of Cape Town, they expressed their sincere complacency with being at the university and with the people they have met while they have been enrolled in the university. These students also concede that there are flaws in the administration and the policies of the university, which affect many “non-white” students. I argue that although the university does make a clear and conscious effort to bring more students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds into this historically white space, from the experiences of the students interviewed the university does not make a concerted effort to either keep these students enrolled and engaged in the school once they arrive, or provide many of them with support that is needed to feel as though the school has created an equal space for them academically or socially.

Unlike the students at the University of Cape Town, the experiences of black students at the University of Stellenbosch were much more segregated from the mainstream population. Although no one can argue that either school has a united black community, one could argue that students at the University of Stellenbosch where black students are in such a large minority, they are forced to unify create at least pieces of a community identity in order create a safe space for themselves at the university. From information received throughout my

research, I argue that although the University of Stellenbosch is working to meet governmental quotas, and now to surpass those quotas in addition to become more diverse on paper, they are not working to create space that is equal for English speaking South Africans, especially black African students either socially or academically. At the conclusion of this analysis, one should garner a better understanding of the experiences of a group of students at both the University of Cape Town and the University of Stellenbosch, and how their experiences fit into the larger framework of the universities respectively.

Findings

Organization of Structure and School System

Transformation Policy Open Forum

One of the most controversial issues on the campus of the University of Cape Town is the “Transformation Policy”. As described by the university this is a policy which is not only used to meet the diversity quota, for historically disadvantaged students, but universities own moral commitment to providing historically disadvantaged students with an opportunity to attend such a historic institution. The Transformation Policy began in the 1990’s at the beginning of democracy, as the university attempted to add more diversity into the school. The policy allowed for historically disadvantaged black South African students to enter into the university with lower matric scores than white students. Twenty years after democracy and the institution of this policy the university is still fighting the same battles on the institution of the policy and how it plays a role in creating a more diverse University of Cape Town.

On April 16th, 2014, Dr. Max Price the Vice Chancellor of the university presented an open forum on the new transformation policy, which the university is set to unveil beginning next year. He touched upon issues with the current system and explained how their new system would aid to create better opportunities for all students. The university believes there are some major flaws, which can be seen in the current system and are affected by how students chose to racially identify themselves. They claim, some students no longer want to identify their race on forms because; it is offensive, even if they are benefitting from the policy. While other students are beginning to misrepresent themselves on paper work and the university has no way to go back and track whether students are truly the race that they claim to be on paper. The university also states, as access to schools continue to improve many black students don’t “need” affirmative action, and resent the implications and stigma surrounding them being given aid. Finally, with the continued socio-economic growth of the black middle class, some people are beginning to see the definition of disadvantage, solely by race problematic

because there are other students of different races with the same socioeconomic and educational background that are not being treated with the same privileges solely because of their race.

When analyzing the current system one must think about the implications of the “defining disadvantage.” It could be seen throughout the talk that over half the students who attended the forum were black, and from a myriad of different socio-economic and educational backgrounds. As Dr. Price spoke of roughly half black students being from “good schools” (Model C), he implied that diversity and race relations could be improved if all students were accepted into the institution on an equal playing field, many black students looked shocked as he made this assertion. Although Dr. Price was speaking of issues which the university was running into, as well as was making it clear that he had hopes to improve the system not, eradicate it, there was a clear disconnect between the Black Students and their administrative counter parts. As Dr. Price presented his final thoughts he posed two directions for the university to move, either the university was going to have to begin “de-racializing” and turn into a race blind school? Examining the question, who does that benefit, and is the university prepared for a dramatic change in the diversity, which they have recently seen? Or, does the university continue to use race as a basis of redress, aiming to benefit the community of historically disadvantaged people?

Dr. Price answered his own question, with the implication that UCT wants to create a “hybrid” model of the two ideas. They are going to implement a three tier system including Band A, Band B, and Band C. Band A (High Achieving by Marks) would be about 15% of each class, and it is determined by NSC and NBT, the university believes that this category will consist of mainly White students, although there may also be black students included in the pool as well. Band B (Disadvantage and weight point score), makes up about 60% of the class, including a large number of Black (South African) students. The makeup for this band includes either NSC Marks or a combination of NSC and NBT scores with an increase of up to 10% dependent on the level of disadvantage of each student (up to 20% in health sciences). Levels of disadvantage can be measured by quality of school, home background including, parents income, parents educational background, English or Afrikaans as second language, and social grants. School disadvantage is defined by a students rank in their class, if a student is in the top 10% of school no points are given, while in the bottom 70% the score increased accordingly. The disadvantage weighting is from 0-10 and is based on a faculty point score. An example of this scoring is, if a student received 70% on their test scores, and receive all 10% of their “disadvantage score” their entrance would be increased from a 70% to a 77%. Even though it appears as though Band B would have predominantly black students, the university vows that both Band A and Band B are race blind. The final Band is Band C; the purpose of this band is target based and is faculty specific to achieve redress quotas. This is typically less than 20% in all areas except health science; this band is picked solely on race, and would include only people from “historically disadvantaged” backgrounds.

As stated earlier, and outlined by Dr. Price in his lecture, the difficulty of testing into each major will influence the percentages in each band. This can be seen from this example, comparing BCOM and Health sciences,

	BCOM	Health Sciences
Band A	32%	9%
Band B	55%	33%
Band C	13%	58%
Total	100%	100%

(Price, April 15th, 2014)

These staunch differences in acceptance levels in each Band and for each major is one of the reasons the university must defend their new hybrid model. There are clear advantages to this model including, their commitment to addressing and achieving redress, flexible race targeting, the selection of top students based on merit, as well as, an increased socio-economic diversity seeing as, roughly half the black students in the university currently are from middle class backgrounds. The new system will hypothetically bring new levels diversity and equalize entry for all students into the university. Unfortunately, there are still some flaws in the system. As the diversity in each class increases the target numbers for students will not continue to increase as well. The university believes as they reach their targets there will be less of a need for redress. This means although the university as a whole may become more diverse, the levels of diversity in each class may not be consistent each year, and the percentage of “historically disadvantaged students” will not fluctuate.

For many black students this new system is worrisome because, they feel as though the new policy is punishing middle class black students, could be intrusive for many black students especially students for lower socio-economic backgrounds. One student stated, ‘if they were hesitant about stating their race before, what gives the university the right to ask them more intrusive questions to judge their “disadvantage”?’ The new system has clear strengths as it tries to address, new levels of “disadvantage” and how it should be handled in “post-apartheid” South Africa but, the question still remains, as the definition of disadvantage changes, and the university tries to continue to redress race, will this new policy have an impact for black South African students in practicality, in their social spaces, academic halls, and lives on campus? Or is it solely to fill a diversity quota for the university?

Observations

Campus Observations

Some of the most interesting pieces of information I gained about the way both the University of Cape Town and the University of Stellenbosch functioned were by participating in the daily lives of students through participant observation. In regards to the University of Cape Town I was given the honor of having lecturers visit the headquarters of the SIT program and lecturing students on a myriad of topics, including the racial dynamics of the university both academically and socially. Each lecturer brought a different knowledge to their understanding of the way the university worked including, a specific racialized perspective of how they saw students interact both on an academic and social level in all school spaces. After interacting with these professors on an intellectual level, I spoke with a few of them on an interpersonal level. They explained to me that although they may have touched upon their ideals about social interaction between race groups at the university, and began to describe the space in the way they saw it presented to black students the most influential and important things that I could learn would be from my own experiences of “being a black student”. This played to my advantage, as I was able to go into the university social spaces and inconspicuously engage with students.

Similar to the University of Cape Town, while at the University of Stellenbosch I engaged with lecturers from the university. Unlike at the University of Cape Town where lecturers were brought off campus to come meet with students in the SIT program, while at the University of Stellenbosch we were stationed directly in the center of all the students because we held classes in the Neelsie center, also known as the University of Stellenbosch Student center. These dynamics allowed for me to not only speak with lecturers offering an understanding of how they engage with students and the dynamics at play but, also was given the opportunity to personal view the dynamics of students as they flurried around me. In all, the participant observation experiences painted a broader picture that what each individual lecturer described but only aided to create the stories that each participant told.

University of Cape Town

There is much to be noted from simply sitting in a space and observing the people around you, one can observe everything from style of dress to groupings between people. These small observations can be useful especially when aided by the personal stories of people who engage in these social spaces for extended period of time. For most students throughout the world one of the most sacred spaces where they interact with each other in an organic fashion would be the lunchroom and the University of Cape Town is no exception.

At first glance when working in the University of Cape Town lunch space, it appears as though the university must be a predominantly Black South African university, the space is mainly crowded with students of color speaking their “home” language. An interesting observation of the way students interact in the space is at first glance it appears that only students of the same race interact with one another. Black students with other black students, coloured, Indian, Muslim, white, and international all segregated into different tables and groupings throughout the cafeteria area. Along with segregation along racial divides there is also a clear division between male and female. Many of the groupings of people are gendered to appear as solely male or solely female, with only a few groups having a compilation of both genders. Although there are exceptions to this rule, seeing groups mixing between races or genders is slim to none. Interestingly, much of the mixing between races appears between boys rather than between girls. Also to be noted, most intermixing occurs between black and coloured or white and coloured students, with little mixing between black and white students.

One may think that this mixing of races or lack thereof is solely based on the racial remnants of social constructed apartheid groupings, but when one digs deeper into the lives of students in the lunchroom, people's choice for sitting together becomes much more complex. When getting closer to many of the groups in the it was observed that many students group together because they have the same “mother tongue”, rather than just because they are of the same race. This is important to note, because it changes the dynamics of the construct of race, it breaks the idea that there could be a single unifying language for the community let alone a group identify for any students at the university especially black students.

A final reason for grouping was physical, including choice of dress and physical features. Many of the groupings are made for people with similar styles or people who are of similar attractiveness levels, as defined by societal norms. Overall, if one thing can be deduced from the participant observation of the lunch space at the University of Cape Town, it is that it is a place, which enjoys groups of people. These groups are more complex than at surface value, as students try to carve out spaces for the individual identities, as they maneuver through the history of the communal space.

University of Stellenbosch

The social dynamics in the lunchroom and student center at the University of Stellenbosch was much different than the ones as depicted at the University of Cape Town. Although both universities are both historically white and are still predominantly white today, the University of Stellenbosch lunchroom was much more reflective of the universities “whiteness” than the lunchroom at the University of Cape Town. When one would walk into the University of Stellenbosch student center food court, it was much harder to find black

students than it was at the University of Cape Town. When looking around the University of Stellenbosch Neelsie center, one would see large groupings of white (mainly Afrikaner) students grouping together. Many of the groupings included both genders but almost none of the groupings included racial mixing. Much like the situation at the University of Cape Town, a large contributor to the lack of interracial grouping was due to the linguistic barriers presented to people who spoke different first languages, especially at a historically Afrikaans university.

When looking around the University of Stellenbosch lunchroom one could see a myriad of coloured students but it was much harder to find black students in these spaces. Unlike their coloured and white counterparts black students were often sitting alone on the outskirts of the lunchroom area, and not engaging with other people. If they were engaging with others it was mainly other black students and they were not in groups bigger than two. While contests occurred, rugby games were watched, and music was played throughout the Neelsie center it almost appeared as though black students were not only unengaged by the happenings of the university space but they were unappreciated as well.

One of the most underrepresented groups were black girls, although you could find small groupings of black males or individual black males throughout the center, finding black girls in this space was much harder than anticipated. Often once they were spotted in the center they were seen getting their food, and then leaving as if they had no right to be staying. I concede, that I did not know the reason for many of the black students scurrying throughout the space or leaving immediately, they may have been late for class or been very busy (as I arrived on the day before a holiday weekend), but there were consistencies from my time prior in Stellenbosch, while inferred that black students especially female students did not occupy this general university space.

When speaking in casual conversation to a group of black students, I enquired about why black students may be hesitant to speak with me while in the Neelsie center? One student described the black population at the school as an already alienated group; students were already marginalized and visibly different from the rest of the populations for reasons other than the obvious colour of their skin. The student implied that they didn't need anymore stigma for the black students by bad mouthing the university, even if that wasn't their intention. Following up in conversation I asked the same group of students, if black students didn't hang out in the campus center like everyone else where could they be found? They replied, 'walk around...you will see them'. As I walked through the Stellenbosch campus I realized that the group was right. There were black students in a myriad of odd places. Often in small groupings and off the main quad, this was an interesting observation because the majority of the student body seemed to occupy general campus spaces and it felt as though black students were attempting to carve their own places on the outskirts of this general vicinity. After speaking with

students in personal interviews, some students agreed that this was definitely the case for some black students at the university.

Social Observations

After engaging in participant observations on campus and personal interviews with students, I was encouraged to see students in a non-campus setting. By seeing students in an area that was not influenced by the university and without forced interactions of people, it would change the way I would view students interacting. When students interacted on a social level outside of campus, in spaces where they would “party” or “hang-out” it changed the dynamics and social capital became more important than intellect or where one goes to school. Issues such as race and socio-economic status became apparent as students chose which places of enjoyment to frequent.

Claremont

Claremont is a suburb outside of Cape Town just south of the University of Cape town. It is an area populated with shopping malls, restaurants, and bars. During the day it could be considered both a local and tourist attraction but at night (especially Thursday) it becomes a hub for University students as they frequent its many bars and restaurants. When speaking with Participant E and Participant F, they informed me that although Claremont on a Thursday night is considered student night, it is mainly only for white students to attend. I attended Claremont on a Thursday night and was surprised when the theories of Participant E and F were completely correct. With each restaurant or bar I traveled to and every group I casually spoke with, I realize that the main inhabitants of this space were white students either from University of Cape Town or University of Stellenbosch. I was astonished to see a few black students, in attendance and realized that although students may inhabit the same space on their campus, things can be radically different as soon as they leave that immediate area.

Observatory

After exploring the Claremont area, I went back to speak with my participants to try and get a better understanding of if there was a space for black students to “party”, if they were not going to Claremont like other students on campus. They explained to me, that many black South African students hold house parties or go into Cape Town to clubs and bars, but if I was going to look near the university the next place I could look was Observatory. Observatory, similarly to Claremont is walking distance from the university and caters to both local residents and university students. When exploring observatory, I realized that it definitely was catering to more than just one race, but it also had a significantly high population of international students. When I attended

nightlife at one of the most popular “student bars” I realized that it was mainly comprised of international students, with sprinklings of black South African students. Although, unlike Claremont there were more faces of black South African students, it still didn’t feel like a space which was carved out for black South African students, again examining the question, if this is a space for all students, why don’t black students feel like it is a space for them?

“Main Street” Stellenbosch

Similarly to the University of Cape Town there are certain areas, which had been carved out for students to engage in nightlife while attending the University of Stellenbosch. This mainly occurred on a main strip in the center of Stellenbosch. The area was near the university campus and appeared to be a space, which was open to all students. Unfortunately, once you entered into many of these establishments this was not the case. Although the groupings of black students at University of Stellenbosch was much smaller than the groupings of black students at the University of Cape Town once again, this public space, which was supposed to be for “all students”, was not welcoming toward these students. When entering the bars on the main street, one saw almost no black faces, and after speaking casually with some black students from the university, they expressed that some of the security for the clubs were racist toward black students if they attempted to enter into the bars or clubs. I then asked the students if they had their own spaces to go out, they said not really but sometimes they would frequent coloured clubs. The coloured clubs were situated on a side street off the main road near a public park. In this park people would sit and drink outside, until they went into the one coloured club. Although this had the feelings of a classic Saturday night in Gugulethu, it was far from that, seeing that once again many black South African students could not be found in the space.

After going to three different areas of social interaction for students outside of campus, I was astounded by information I had received about the black space outside of the university campus, I decided to probe these questions further in in-depth interviews with students.

Student Interviews

The final section of inquiry that I engaged in was, one on one interviews with students from each university. During this time I sat down with each of my participants and discussed a myriad of issues including their home lives, as well as their lives at each respective university. In each of these interviews I made sure to ask students questions, which were specific to each of their universities. For this reason I found it important to separate the answers from each university rather than compile them both together. There are a plethora of

differences between the two schools, which, I found out play a difference in the experience of black students at each of the universities.

To begin The University of Cape Town is a historically white, English Medium institution, while The University of Stellenbosch is a historically white, Afrikaans medium university. The language barrier in itself plays a role for each of the students because for many black students at the University of Stellenbosch, Afrikaans is their third language rather, than their second language, as it seems for many of the students at The University of Cape Town. Issues such as linguistics, placement of the institution, as well as the history of each institution play a role in the experience that each one of the students had at each university. In the end while compiling finding, I found it important to group students from each school together and in closing analyze the two universities and the experiences of the students against one another.

University of Cape Town

There were 4 participants interviewed at the University of Cape Town. They were participants E, F, G, and H. This included 3 males and 1 female; three participants were current students while one had recently graduated. All came from the continent of Africa but, not all were born in South Africa, they gave a myriad of different answers but each answer added to the creation of their narrative while attending the University of Cape Town.

Home Life

The first section of the interviews analyzed the home life of each of the participants in the study. Understanding the home life of each of the students was important because, it aided in telling the narrative of the students lives prior to their experience at the university. It was also important for an institution such as The University of Cape Town because, under the new “transformation policy”, home life prior to entrance to the institution is one of the factors which is examined in defining disadvantage.

Linguists

As stated earlier, The University of Cape Town is an English medium institution, not surprisingly for all of the participants in the study; English was not their “home language”. For Participants G and H, the two South African participants their home language was IsiXhosa. For Participant E, who is originally from Zimbabwe his home language is Shauna, while Participant F from Kenya’s home language was Swahili. Three out of the four participants said that English was the mode of instruction at their school. They all noted this was a significant aid when they entered into the university because, unlike some of their black African peers who struggled to not only understand the modes of English in the social setting of the university, but English as a medium of

instruction. Participant H attended a township school and described IsiXhosa as the linguistic medium of instruction. As predicted by the three other students he described his experience at UCT as an adjustment that was difficult. He said, many professors expected him to immediately understand what the topics of their lecture, but for him this was more difficult since he had often found himself translating lecturers statements it back to his home language before he could completely comprehend the lectures. This was problematic as it increased his time of study and made his work more difficult. Participant H, agreed with the three other students and said that for many lower income students, especially students who arrived from township schools the adjustments into solely English medium university, especially adjusting to the caliber of a university such as UCT is difficult and plays a significant role in their experience at the institution.

Schooling prior

As stated earlier three of the students attended English medium schools, but each of these schools were significantly different. Participants E and F attended English medium schools in their home countries until they came to South Africa to attend the University of Cape Town. Participant F explained she never attended a “black school”; both her primary and high schools were Model C schools. She admitted this impacted both her educational experience and social experience when she arrived at the university. There were stereotypes made by both black and white students. Finally, Participant H, attended a township school, the linguistic medium was Xhosa, with English mixed in as well. He, similarly to participant G admitted that his schooling experience prior to University of Cape Town influenced his experience while at the university.

Socio-economic status

With regard to socio-economic status the participants gave a diverse array of answers. The two students who came from different African countries (Participants E and F) described growing up in metropolitan areas in middle class families. Participant G described being born in Langa, which is the first township in Cape Town. It is a township with includes a variety of socio-economic statuses including, very low socio-economic status through the middle class. At a young age this participant then moved to Goodwood, a white suburb outside of Cape Town. Her socio-economic status then jumped as she changed neighborhood, from lower income, to middle or upper-middle class. The final Participant (H) was from a very impoverished socio-economic status, he was raised in a shack in a township outside of Johannesburg. All participants admitted their socio-economic status growing up affected how they identified and how society identified them both at UCT and in South Africa in general.

Family structure

Family structure was something, which was important to all four of the participants. Three out of the four participants (E, F, G) described growing up in two parent households. Participant E spoke of having siblings in the household as well. All three participants described the influence their family structure had in their decision in attending the University of Cape Town. All spoke of the influence their fathers had on their decision, admitting each of their fathers played a large part in encouraging them to apply to the university and later helping them decide that the university was where they should spend their time doing their tertiary education. In contrast, none of the participants spoke of the influence their mother had in the decision to enter into the university. All admitted their mothers were a part of their lives, but not as significant in the decision making as their father.

In contrast to the other three participants, Participant H was raised by a single mother. She was a domestic worker for a white family, who he describes as “racist” even in regards to her. He was one of multiple children and was the first one to attend college. He spoke of the importance of depicting to his family that there was a life outside of poverty. All four participants understood that their decision to attend UCT was a sense of pride of their families, and knew that it had an impact on their status within the family, aiding in their decision making when deciding to attend the institution.

Self Identifier

All students, which participated, “self-identified” as Black. The two students from foreign African countries defined themselves by their nationalities as well as being black. This included participant E who defined himself as a Black Zimbabwean, while, Participant F defined himself as a Black Kenyan. In contrast to one of the South African participants, neither of these participants defined themselves according to a clan or a tribe. Participant G defined herself as black, Xhosa, and Woman. While Participant H simply defined himself as black, South African, and a male. Two out of the four participants spoke of being something other than simply a racial signifier; surprisingly both of these participants were South African. Participant G stated she was a, ‘Black, young, unemployed, UCT graduate, previously disadvantaged, and a Xhosa woman’ (April 2014). Similarly participant H defined himself as “Black, South African, and Human”. It is interesting to note that both of the south African participants chose to define themselves as other things besides simply their race, both admitted this is because they chose to define themselves by more than what society may see.

Societal Identifier

As stated earlier, all participants defined themselves as “black”; in contrast only one participant said that society viewed them as solely black as well. Participant E admitted that he believed 100% of the time society (both at UCT and South Africa in general) defined him the same way he saw himself, as a black man. In Contrast, all three other participants said society often saw them in a manner, which was different than the way they viewed themselves.

Participant G admitted that society about 80% of the time viewed her as coloured due to the light complexion of skin. She also admitted that many other black people defined her as a “cheese girl”, this is a someone that is street smart but doesn’t have to deal with all the troubles or daily struggles experienced by most black people. Similar to Participant G, Participant F described the influence of other black people in society, especially on campus, defining him as something other than how he saw himself. Although he agreed that people saw him a black man, other students may define him as a “Coconut” or someone who is black with “black” tendencies, but attempts to act “white” or have “white” tendencies. He believes he gains this definition because of the sports he enjoys or even his major.

Finally, participant H described being seen as Nigerian (although he is south Africa), he admits this has to do with his physical characteristics including, height, skin tone, and facial features. He can even reminisce around the time of the Xenophobia Attacks of 2008, when he felt endangered because of the way he felt society viewed him. The single thing that the group of participants had in common about the way they felt society viewed them, was an understanding that the way society saw themselves had an impact on their time at UCT and how they were able to function on campus both academically and socially.

Experience at UCT

Why UCT?

As stated earlier all students spoke about internal pressures from their familial structures, about choosing UCT or even applying. All students spoke about the universities ranking as the “number 1 university in Africa”. For participant G she knew that this was important because, people spoke about the intellectual stamina it took to attend the university and the stigma that came along with obtaining a degree from such a prestigious place. The societal pressures coupled with internal pressures of her own and her parents drove her to chose UCT. She also admitted, she was more comfortable with attending an English medium university such as UCT, rather than an Afrikaans medium school such as University of Stellenbosch. This was for a myriad of reasons, including language barriers and preconceived stereotypes about the community. Similarly to Participant G, Participant H also felt personal pressure in choosing UCT; he wanted to prove to his siblings and his family that it was possible. He wanted to be not only the first but also, also the best. Participant G also admitted when deciding

between his final two schools he was trying to avoid what he described as the, ‘blatantly racist tendencies of The University of Pretoria’. It was clear from each student that all felt internally driven to enter into the University of Cape Town and also felt that it was important to prove that they could attend such a prestigious institution of higher learning.

The Role of Race

All participants admitted that race played a large role in their experience at The University of Cape Town. They referenced the idea of “being black” in a historically white space. Participant E couldn’t articulate how this participation in the space affected him but admitted it had strong sentiments that it played a role in how his experience has played out at the university. In contrast, Participant F was very clear about how his “blackness” played a role in his experience with not only black students but white students at the university as well. The participant felt that for black students needs, wants, or interests are often pushed to the side for things such as sport or student organization, by the administration or white students. In contrast, he felt that as a black student if you chose to engage in things such as rugby, ballroom, yacht club, or programming society to name a few, you can never be fully accepted by the white students, because they see you as “different”, but you are also shunned from black spaces because they feel you are trying to “assimilate” into white culture. He concedes this idea of “othering” could be influenced by the surrounding landscape of Cape Town, he admits that it is a very divided city, and although it houses a lot of racial groups there is not much mixing between the groups which plays a role in how stereotypes continue to be perpetuated.

Participants G and H simply stated that race was the defining factor in their experience at University of Cape Town. Participant G defined her time at the university, as her opportunity to define her “blackness”, and she was “black to the core” (April 2014). Although she engaged with white students and had white friends (as she had done throughout her life), she spent more time with her black friends and other black students. In contrast for Participant H, although he had never been in situation where he was on equal academic footing with white students and he defined himself as black, he still surprisingly found himself with many white friends.

Both students admitted that race has played has made an impact on their experience in not only their social setting at the university but an academic setting as well. Participant G believed that race plays a role in academics, as professors either felt sympathy for black students or felt like they weren’t qualified to be at the university. Either way the dichotomy of the two ideals created a struggle for black students, as “White” being right is still the standard of many of the lecturers and students are either forced to assimilate or can struggle to carve their own space. Participant H is quoted as saying “UCT is so European you can throw it in London” (April 2014), he concedes although UCT has made strides in rhetoric, it has been failing to make strides on the

ground. This is an idea that all students could agree was true, although students may be accepted on paper, they were not being accepted or integrated as more than physical bodies.

Exclusion

Even though all participants felt the university was doing a poor job integrating all black students into the university, none of them had experiences in which they felt like they personally had been excluded by the university. In contrast, all students felt that black students were still at some form of disadvantage at the university. Participant E believe this stemmed from a lack of resources but, concedes that he felt many black students spent a significant amount of time blaming the apartheid past for their exclusion in the university. Participant F disagreed with this assertion; he felt that there was a lack of academic support from the administration. This lack of support coupled with many first generation college students' lack of confidence, and ability to help themselves created a self-perpetuating cycle of marginalization and feelings of exclusion. Participant G agreed with the assertion of the lack of support from the administration, she admitted that many black students were either forced to create their own cultural ideologies and cling dear the ones they brought with them, or were forced to assimilate into the majority "white" culture of the institution. This forced decision between these two extremes created a tough decision and dichotomy between many black students.

All students agreed that the separation and multiple groupings of black students only aided in breaking down the ideology that there is a monolithic story for the black student. Although the students knew that there could not be a monolithic story, especially for the myriad of different groupings of black people at the institution, they often felt that there was almost a monolith pressed upon them. Although they felt this monolith was pressed upon them, none of the participants felt like there was much unity amongst black students. There were clear divisions between international students and native black South Africans, differences in socio-economic status, and levels of "assimilation" into the mainstream UCT culture. With UCT being less than 60% Black, as stated by participant G, these fissures create stereotypes within the communities about each group. He said there is nothing worse at UCT than being poor and black, they are forgotten, and often not welcome. Each participant had their own ideas of exclusion and how they saw other groups as being excluded or included into the larger framework of the university but, one thing was clear, they all agree that there is a form marginalization of the black body at the university.

Ideas on the transformation policy

As stated earlier, all students agreed that the university looked as though it was diverse on paper, but there were problems on the ground. Three out of the four students agreed that the Transformation Policy at the

University of Cape Town is absolutely still necessary. Participant G stated, “Black students are still historically disadvantaged” (April 2014). As long as the policy is still trying to aid in bringing more students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds into the university it is necessary. Without the transformation policy many students would not be given a chance to attend the institution. She says, it gives these students a sense of agency and attempts to give a “black voice” to the university. Participant G does concede with the rest of the group and believe that there are problematic and flawed pieces of the policy. Participant H believed it did a good job getting students into the university but did a poor job of helping them finish the university and graduate. Some students are so disadvantaged to the core that they need more support from the university, although they need space to grow and adapt to the space, they still need support so they don’t fall so behind and drop out. In the end all students agreed that transformation could not be quantified, it is more than simply having black students in a historically white space, it will take more than physical integration to make University of Cape Town as diverse as believe to represent.

University of Stellenbosch

The University of Stellenbosch is a historically white, Afrikaans medium university. At this sight there were four participants, all male, and all current students at the university. Three out of the four students came from other African countries; each narrative was different but aided in created the story of these students from the University.

Home Life

Linguistics

Similarly to the students at the University of Cape Town, none of the students had the medium of instruction at the university as their “home language”. For each student Afrikaans was either their second or third language. Participant A spoke isiXhosa, a native language of South Africa, while the three other students spoke languages which were specific to each of their home countries. None of the students felt hesitant about going to an Afrikaans medium school, all said they felt confident in their proficiency to adapt well to courses. They also all conceded that any courses, which they felt they couldn’t take in Afrikaans, they would take as a mixed English and Afrikaans medium course. Although all admitted that they did not feel as though they were hindered by Afrikaans as the mode of instruction, they did believe language played a role socially in their experience at the university.

Schooling prior to entrance into university

Even though all students had academic proficiency in Afrikaans, none of the students attended Afrikaans medium schools prior to entering into the University of Stellenbosch. Unlike at the University of Cape town three out of the four participants attended private school before they entered into university. Participant A attended an English medium private day school, entitled The Waldorf School his entire life. This is a private art school in a southern suburb in Cape Town; it was a primarily middle and upper middle class and historically white institution. It was considered more liberal and diverse than most private schools. Two participants attended private schools in their home countries before moving to South Africa to finish their private schooling. Participant C attended a private day school in his home country of Zimbabwe, and then attends a private, historically white, boarding school in Durbanville to finish high school and matric. Similarly to all the other participants he said his schooling played a large role in his decision to attend Stellenbosch, as his high school was a “feeder” school into the university. Participant B, similarly to participant C also attended private day school in his country but in primary moved to private boarding school on the eastern cape near Port Elizabeth. The school was also an English medium, historically white institution. All students agreed that their time at these institutions, especially as black students in historically white schools influenced their experiences at the university.

Socio-economic status

All four students were raised in major metropolitan area. Both participants B and C were raised in the capitals of their home countries. Participant B was raised in the capital of Namibia and was from a middle class background while; Participant C was raised in the capital of Zimbabwe also coming from from a middle class background. Only one of the participants was raised in South Africa for their entire life, he was raised in Cape Town, but spoke of the Eastern Cape (outside of King Williamstown) as his home. He was from a lower socio-economic status than the other participants, his mother was a teacher at the private day school he attended but after she switched jobs he was lived with a wealthy white family from his high school. All participants explained that their socio-economic status aided in their quality of schooling and influenced their entrance into the university.

Family structure

Unlike with the students at the University of Cape Town, only one participant spoke about coming from a strong family structure. Participant A spoke about being raised by a single mother, he had strong ties to his extended family that lived in the Eastern Cape and was quite close with his older brother. He felt the importance of education because his mother was a teacher. He admits he felt guilty when his brother was forced to leave his school when his mother chose to join the church. In high school he described continuing to have a close relationship with his family, but began living with a white family from his high school. He considers them a part of his family as he lived with them during the week (because it was closer to his high school) and then would go stay with his mother on the weekends. He admits his family in high school played a large role in his decision to attend Stellenbosch, and played a role in how he sees himself within the greater Stellenbosch community.

None of the other three participants spoke about having strong family structures. Participant D chose not to speak about their familial structure. In contrast, Participants A and B spoke about their families wanting the best education possible, and this was the fuel to influence them to send them to private boarding schools. They both admit this may have influenced why they didn't have much to say about their family structures prior to their entrance into the university.

Self identifier

Similarly to the students at the University of Cape Town, all students self-identified as "Black". Participant A, identified as black South African, he also identified with his clan, which is Xhosa. The other three participants self identified as black African, including, Namibian, Zimbabwean, and Nigerian. Unlike with the participants at the University of Cape Town, all students saw themselves as male, and three fourths of the students saw themselves as undergraduate students while, one saw himself as a postgraduate. Interestingly, none of the students spoke of identifying themselves as anything other than by a racial category, this is complicated when thinking about how they may see themselves in the larger framework of both the university and South Africa in general.

Societal identifier

In contrast to the students at the university of Cape Town, all four students agreed that the greater society of both the university as well as South Africa, agreed with their assertion that they were black. Three fourths of the students believed that society couldn't even discern between their different nationalities, and black South African. They said this plays a role in university life, especially, when deciding with whom to

associate. Participant B admits, he chooses to hang out with other Namibians, white or black, he admits sometimes people are perplexed by this assertion because they don't always see the entire group as Namibian but instead an intermixing of black and white students. All agree that society viewing them as black played a role in their experience at the university.

Experiences at University of Stellenbosch

Why University of Stellenbosch

Three fourths of the participants heard about the university from their schooling prior to entering university. Two out of these three students wanted to go to the University of Cape Town but were not accepted. They said the diversity of the university plus its ranking as the number one university in Africa played a role in their desire to attend the institution. All three undergraduate students were hesitant about attending the University of Stellenbosch due to the racial stereotypes, prejudice, and preconceived notions that they heard before entering the institution. All three students who attended private schools spoke about knowing people from their schools that had attended the university and influenced their decision to attend as well. Participant A also spoke about a family member, from his family in high school attending and influencing his decision to attend the university as well. It was clear, as stated earlier for all the students the influence of the affluence of their prior schooling played a large role in their decision to attend the institution.

Experiences at University of Stellenbosch

As stated earlier three fourths of the students were hesitant about attending the university due to prior ideas. The same three students described their experience of attending the university as better than they could have anticipated. Participant A believed that there was conservative thinking at the university, which was an ideology of many students but thus far he had not been a victim of any prejudice of that magnitude. Although the school is near to Cape Town he does concede that Stellenbosch has a different racial atmosphere and has a few more racial incidents than he anticipated. Participant C was originally concerned about speaking Afrikaans in a social setting but as the university has become more Anglophone it has gotten easier. Finally Participant D admitted the university was "80% good and 20% bad" (April 2014) although there was an initial culture shock from his home country because, in Nigeria there is no implication of certain people as second class citizens as he has seen at the university, he does concede that there are also others who do not have this ideology. All participants agree that the university is very white and very Afrikaans; participant A equates it to living in a bubble, which is unrealistic to the world. All students agree that they wish there was more diversity, especially of black students at the university.

The Role of Race

Even though all students hoped for more diversity and agree that the university is very white, only one student believes that race has played a role in their experiences while at the university. Participant A, agrees that his race has impacted his time at Stellenbosch but also concedes that he does not let it impede in his life. He has had white girlfriends in the past, as well as white friends today. He believes that his ability to intermingle between the two worlds has prohibited him from having a truly negative experience with race but also admits that for a lot of black South African students (himself included) there is a certain level of comradery that allows them to stick together. In contrast to participant A, both Participant B and C do not believe race has played a factor in their time at the University of Stellenbosch at all. Both students say that they don't allow race to play a factor in their lives; therefore it cannot consume their time at the university. Participant B admits black South African students tend to stick together, but the black African international students are more likely to mix within the larger Stellenbosch community. Participant C, concedes that for some black students race definitely plays a role in their time in the university but, he believes 'if you do not allow race to place a large role in your life then it will not'. In conclusion, it is clear from the interviews with each one of these students that even if they do not believe their race has directly affected their time at the university it has played to a level of exclusion or marginalization for some Black students at the university.

Exclusion

Similar to the students at the University of Cape Town, none of the students felt excluded during their time at the university. Students also admitted that although they have never felt personally excluded, there are definitely black students at the university who felt either marginalized or excluded. Participant A described this feeling of marginalization, and said it was the reason many black students felt the need to stick together, there was strength in numbers. To many students he admitted the remnants as the language of Afrikaans as a symbol of oppression, or the foundation of the institution as the birthplace of apartheid, play large roles in marginalization and deter many students from continuing at the university. To all the students it was clear that although they may not fit the bubble of exclusion, the feelings of exclusion by some black students were justified and warranted.

Ideas on the language debate

As stated earlier all students yearned for more diversity within the university, they all agree that a change in the language policy at the school would allow it to move from a solely Afrikaans medium university to a dual English medium university is absolutely necessary if the university is serious about creating a more

diverse and inclusive community for students. Participant A notes, many Afrikaner students are clinging to the ideals of their past generations and family members by only wanting to speak Afrikaans and keep others out of the institution, but it is time to move the school forward. The language debate will attract more English speaking people, including black students, and will aid in increasing the diversity within the university. All students admit that a change in the language will bring more diversity but they also concede that the university has a long way to go to get rid of many of the stigmas and stereotypes which they need to rid themselves of in order to make the university not only more diverse on paper but more inclusive in practice.

Conclusion

In order to conclude and analyze the findings of this research project one must not only review the historical implications of the changes within the education system in South Africa, they must think about how the findings of this independent research have impacted the understanding of the higher education from the perspective of a small group of students enrolled in historically white universities in post-apartheid South Africa.

Similarities between University of Cape Town and University of Stellenbosch

Marginalization

In analyzing the experiences of both the students at the University of Cape Town and the University of Stellenbosch there were both similarities and differences between the two. One of the biggest similarities was the idea that there was some form of marginalization for black students at each of the institutions. Although, none of the participants expressed feelings of marginalization, while at the university, they did concede for many black students at each university this was not the case. All participants at the University of Stellenbosch spoke about black students feeling marginalized from the larger Stellenbosch community, while, students at the University of Cape Town spoke about a myriad of different issues with marginalization within the university community. These participants felt that some black students felt excluded by their own race, while others felt excluded from the university as a whole. One thing was clear from analyzing the ideas of both groups of participants, for many black students at these universities, marginalization is a real sentiment as black students are trying to claim space in these historically white institutions.

The Monolithic story of the Black student

Another common factor between both groups was the assertion that there was not a monolithic narrative for black students at either university. Although both groups made the statement that the university as a whole tried to lump black students into a single story, many black students fought this ideal attempted to change this by creating their own grouping within the universities. There were contrasts between the two group ideologies, at the University of Cape Town students expressed a need for increased unification between all black students. They hoped to find more common ground between black students rather than the internal attacking some participants had experienced. In contrast at University of Stellenbosch participants spoke about there being unification of black South African students, as well as unification of other black African international students, but a need for more separation between these groups so that they all could fit into the larger sphere of the

university more fluidly. These ideas impact how the “black voice” can be heard on campus, and influence the creation of a “black narrative”, posing the question, is there need for a communal space, solely for black students? Rather, is their unification attributing to their marginalization in spaces, as well as the perpetuating the stereotypes of the monolithic black narrative?

Dissatisfaction with administration

The final commonality between both groups was their dissatisfaction with the university administration. Both groups expressed that although on paper their university seemed to be making strides in creating diversity, they were doing a poor job in implementing these changes in practice. Both groups admitted that there were many social problems within the university, race relations between not only students but lecturers created an environment where some black students felt like they weren’t welcome in these historically white spaces. At the University of Cape Town the participants wanted to see more of a commitment from the administration to keep the diversity reflected in the acceptance of students, thanks in part to their Transformation Policy, rather than failing students as some black students are forced to drop out before graduation. While at the University of Stellenbosch, participants wanted to see an increase in diversity from the beginning, an increase in not only English medium students but also, black students in general. Overall, participants yearned for there to be more of a space created for black student. All admit, both the transformation policy and the language debate could aid in creating more diversity on paper, but what is needed is not physical bodies, but cultural integration.

Final Thoughts

Peggy McIntosh once said,

“Privilege exists when one group has something of value that is denied to others simply because of the groups they belong to, rather than because of anything they’ve done or failed to do. Access to privilege does not determine one’s outcomes, but it is definitely an asset that makes it more likely that whatever talent, ability, and aspirations a person with privilege has will result in something positive for them.”

For many black students, the idea of “privilege” and access to privilege, is something they must grapple with daily, especially in a historically white spaces. As many students pass through their daily lives at these universities its easy to see the physical integration of the student body, as mixed groups of people of color, pass through the spaces such as university lunchrooms, quads, or lectures. It would be simplistic to say that this physical depiction of integration is representative of the feelings of many black students on campus.

After studying the history of the education system in South Africa it is clear that there were conscious decisions made to separate groups of people. With things such as the Separate Amenities act of 1953 and The Extension of University Education Act of 1959, it was clear that the apartheid regime, used space to create the physical manifestation of difference and privilege within South Africa. Today the remnants of these ideologies and stereotypes are still engrained in some people's memories. Although, in democratic South Africa, the ideology of the "Rainbow Nation" is the governing force, when thinking about race relations and unification the state, there are many strides that still need to be made to make this ideology a reality.

As the higher education system, Historically White Universities on the Western Cape, at The University of Cape Town and the University of Stellenbosch continue to grow and thrive in the new democratic South Africa; they must examine the type of narrative and space they want to create for their new black students. As the history of apartheid is still visible in the back mirror, as these institutions continue to drive into the future, each university must make a conscious effort to implement a safe and culturally integrated space for all students on campus. Although there is not a single story for the black student at either of these institutions, the narrative of a 'historically disadvantaged' past is still a book being written today. As black students continue to enter into these spaces of historically white privilege, people must remember, "they are too, UCT" or University of Stellenbosch, or any other historically white space in the nation of South Africa. It is their right to integrate both physically and culturally rather than be forced to assimilate into a past that for many people is one they never want to relive again.

Recommendations for Further Study

If one were to do further research into this topic, I believe that it is important to more South African Students. Although the narratives provided by all of the participants, including the international African students were invaluable. Having a larger narrative provided from the black South African perspective would aid in the analysis of a post-apartheid society.

Another interesting addition would be to incorporate more universities into the study. Both the University of Cape Town and the University of Stellenbosch, are wonderful universities with a myriad of literature and statistics to compare with the, as well as, provide an interesting view of Historically White Universities in the western cape. In order to make the study more reflective of the entire higher education system, in addition to universities it would be an asset to analyze Historically White Colleges and Technikons as well.

Finally, it would be interesting to attend more courses at each university. Speaking with the lectures from each university was important in understanding how the power dynamics of lecturers and students, are at play at the university, especially in regards to race relations but, for future study it would be interesting to analyze the dynamics of the classroom. This would provide a observations to back up assertions made by participants, as well as would give a good dichotomy between the racial dynamics of classrooms and social settings.

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Appendices

Interview Questions

**Subject to change dependent on each interviewee*

- What is your name?
- Where are you from?
- What is your “home community like”?
- How do you identify yourself?
- How do you think society identifies you?
- Why did you decide to study at UCT (or University of Stellenbosch)
- Did you experience any obstacles getting into UCT? (Or University of Stellenbosch)
- What has your experience at UCT ((or University of Stellenbosch) been like?
 - Was there ever a point where you felt excluded?
 - How much do you think your race has played a role in this experience??
- What do you think of the debate around UCT’s transformation policy, and how it impacts on who gets into UCT to study what?
- What do you think about the language debate occurring around Stellenbosch becoming a dual-lingual university

SIT Study Abroad

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CONSENT FORM

1. Brief description of the purpose of this study

The purpose of this study is to the effects and experiences of Blacks South African students in a Post-Apartheid society within the context of historically 'White' University setting, including, The University of Cape Town and University of Stellenbosch. This project will analyze the experiences of Black South African students at these historically 'White' institutions. The focus of the project is their experiences prior to University, including but not limited to home life and community, juxtaposed against their experiences at the University of Cape Town and University of Stellenbosch. . At the end of the research, one should gain a better understand of whether students believe they are forced to assimilate into majority culture in University or all cultures are equally shared in both an academic and social realm.

2. Rights Notice

In an endeavor to uphold the ethical standards of all SIT ISP proposals, this study has been reviewed and approved by a Local Review Board or SIT Institutional Review Board. If at any time, you feel that you are at risk or exposed to unreasonable harm, you may terminate and stop the interview. Please take some time to carefully read the statements provided below.

- a. **Privacy** - all information you present in this interview may be recorded and safeguarded. If you do not want the information recorded, you need to let the interviewer know.
- b. **Anonymity** - all names in this study will be kept anonymous unless the participant chooses otherwise.
- c. **Confidentiality** - all names will remain completely confidential and fully protected by the interviewer. By signing below, you give the interviewer full responsibility to uphold this contract and its contents. The interviewer will also sign a copy of this contract and give it to the participant.

Participant's name printed

Participant's signature and date

Interviewer's name printed

Interviewer's signature and date